

## Message Text

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12

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00

NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /077 W

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O R 290915Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5141

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

UNCLAS CAPE TOWN 0492

DEPT PLEASE PASS TO SENATOR PERCY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: RF, SF, PFOR, PINT, PINS, MILI

SUBJ: VORSTER COMMENTS ON RHODESIA

1. SUMMARY: EMBASSY HAS JUST RECEIVED ADVANCE HANSARD TEXT OF PM VORSTER'S APRIL 22 PARLIAMENTARY STATEMENT REGARDING SAME DAY'S LONDON TIMES REPORT THAT SAG HAD DECIDED TO SEND NO FURTHER MILITARY ASSISTANCE--NEITHER TROOPS NOR EQUIPMENT- TO RHODESIA AND THAT THIS DECISION HAD PROMPTED VISIT OF RHODESIAN DEFENSE MINISTER VAN DER BIJL TO SOUTH AFRICA LAST MONTH FOR HIGH-LEVEL MEETING. VORSTER DID NOT DEAL WITH SPECIFICS OF TIMES ARTICLE INCLUDING REPORT THAT 34 S.A. HELICOPTERS ON LOAN TO RHODESIA ARE NOT RPT NOT TO BE WITHDRAWN.

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HE SIMPLY SAID THAT DECISION REPORTE IN TIMES HAD NOT BEEN TAKEN

NOR HAD REPORTED MEETING WITH VAN DER BIJL TAKEN PLACE. IN SAME SPEECH PM WARNED KAUNDA AND OTHERS TO MODERATE RHETORIC AND ACTIONS AND CALLED UPON BRITAIN TO RECOGNIZE ITS SPECIAL OBLIGATIONS (NOT FURTHER DEFINED) TO RHODESIA. WHILE IN SOUTH AFRICA, SENATOR PERCY EXPRESSED INTEREST IN VIEWING TEXT OF VORSTER'S REMARKS. END SUMMARY.

2. INTERESTINGLY RHODESIA HERALD FRONT PAGED VORSTER'S COMMENTS WITH HEADLINE THAT "S.A. 'WILL NOT DENY SUPPORT TO RHODESIA'". USE OF QUOTATION MARKS ATTRIBUTES WORDS TO VORSTER WHICH HE DID NOT UTTER AND CONVERS, FOR RHODESIAN CONSUMPTION, SAG'S CONTINUING UNWILLINGNESS TO STATE PUBLICLY ITS POSITION ON MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO RHODESIA INTO A RINGING STATEMENT OF SUPPORT.

3. FOLLOWING IS FULLTEXT OF PM'S COMMENTS ON LONDON TIMES ARTICLE:

"UNFORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, REPORTS ARE FREQUENTLY PUBLISHED WHICH ARE ENTIRELY FABRICATED OR BASED ENTIRELY ON SPECULATION, AND THEN PUT OUT AS FEELERS. SUBSEQUENTLY ONE IS CONTINUALLY ASKED FOR ONE'S COMMENT ON SUCH REPORTS. CONSEQUENTLY IT DOES NOT MATTER WHAT COMMENT ONE MAKES ON THEM. THE REPORTS ARE USUALLY OF SUCH A NATURE THAT ONE'S COMMENTS CAN ONLY CAUSE FURTHER DAMAGE.

SUCH A REPORT APPEARED THIS MORNING ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE LONDON TIMES. THE REPORT DEALT WITH CERTAIN MILITARY ASSISTANCE WHICH SOUTH AFRICA HAD SUPPOSEDLY RENDERED TO RHODESIA IN THE PAST, ACCORDING TO THIS REPORT, ASSISTANCE WHICH SOUTH AFRICA HAD ALLEGEDLY CANCELLED AT A MEETING LAST MONTH, SOMETHING WHICH LED INTER ALIA--THIS IS THE INFERENCE--TO A MEETING WITH MINISTER P.K. VAN DER BIJL OF RHODESIA. I AM NOT GOING TO MAKE ANY COMMENT WHATSOEVER ON WHAT WE ARE GIVING OR ARE NOT GIVING, HAD ALLEGEDLY GIVEN OR HAD NOT GIVEN, TO RHODESIA. I SHALL LEAVE IT AT THAT. BUT I DO WANT TO MAKE IT VERY CLEAR THAT NO SUCH DECISION, SUCH AS THE ONE REFERRED TO IN THE SAID REPORT, WAS TAKEN. NOR DID ANY SUCH MEETING TAKE PLACE. WHILE PARLIAMENT WAS IN

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SESSION MR. VAN DER BIJL WAS HERE IN SOUTH AFRICA, BUT HE WAS UP IN THE NORTH AND NO TALKS WHATSOEVER WERE HELD WITH HIM BY ANY MEMBER OF THE GOVERNMENT OR ANY OTHER PERSON IN A POSITION OF AUTHORITY. CONSIDERING THE WIDE FIELD OF INFLUENCE OF THE REPORT, I FELT THAT I SHOULD FURNISH THIS EXPLANATION."

4. IN SAME SPEECH VORSTER APPEALED TO LEADERS OF SOUTHERN

AFRICA, PARTICULARLY PRESIDENT OF ZAMBIA "WHO TALK VERY EASILY OF WAR, IN MANY CASES KNOWING FULL WELL THAT THEY CANNOT AFFORD IT ECONOMICALLY AND OTHERWISE" TO MODERATE THEIR RHETORIC AND "TO REFRAIN FROM DRAWING THE BOW TOO TAUT".

5. VORSTER THEN SAID,

"I MUST ISSUE A SERIOUS WARNING, SIR, AND I WANT TO TRUST THAT LEADERS, IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND ELSEWHERE, WILL TAKE COGNISANCE OF THIS. THE KILLING OF INNOCENT MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN IS NOT ONLY BARBARIC AND DETESTABLE; IT CAN ULTIMATELY BE DANGEROUS FOR THE PERPETRATORS AS WELL AS FOR THEIR INCITERS. WHETHER THEY ARE TOURISTS FROM SOUTH AFRICA OR OTHER TOURISTS, OR WHETHER THEY ARE INHABITANTS, BLACK OR WHITE, OF RHODESIA OR OF ANY OTHER COUNTRY, SUCH DEEDS CAN ONLY UNLEASH FORCES WHICH COULD HAVE FAR-REACHING CONSEQUENCES. THEY COULD AROUSE UNBRIDLED EMOTIONS. THEY COULD HAVE FAR-REACHING CONSEQUENCES FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA. I WANT TO TRUST THAT PEOPLE WHO HAVE CONTROL OVER THIS KIND OF THING WILL CONSIDER, AND CONSIDER VERY EARNESTLY, WHAT THE EFFECT OF THIS COULD BE ON THE SOUTHERNMOST POINT OF THE CONTINENT OF AFRICA."

6. PRIME MINISTER ALSO REPEATED WELL-KNOWN POSITION THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAS NEVER BEEN INVOLVED IN RHODESIA'S INTERNAL DISPUTE AND THAT "WE HAVE NEVER PRESCRIBED TO ANYONE, THAT WE HAVE NEVER TRIED TO TWIST ANYONE'S ARM AND THAT WE HAVE NEVER GIVEN ORDERS". TAKING NOTE OF APPEALS TO HIM IN CERTAIN BRITISH NEWSPAPERS TO ACT DECISIVELY ON RHODESIA, VORSTER STATED APPEALS SHOULD BE MADE INSTEAD TO BRITISH GOVERNMENT. HE SAID, "THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS ADOPTED THE ATTITUDE THAT IT HAS CERTAIN RIGHTS IN RHODESIA. WITHOUT ARGUING THE QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT THIS IS TRUE, I JUST UNCLASSIFIED

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WANT TO SAY THAT IF ITS PREMISE IS THAT RHODESIA IS ITS TERRITORY AND THE RHODESIANS LIVING THERE ITS SUBJECTS, THEN I BELIEVE THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS UNDER A SPECIAL OBLIGATION IN THAT REGARD. THEN IT IS NOT ONLY THE NEIGHBOURING STATES THAT ARE UNDER OBLIGATIONS, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS ALSO UNDER A SPECIAL OBLIGATION AS FAR AS THAT MATTER IS CONCERNED." BOWDLER

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